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AB(24/25)64

EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC BOARD

**Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday 10th June 2025 at 9.00am
Horizon Suite (LRC5), Sighthill Campus**

PRESENT:

Professor S Rigby (Principal & Vice Chancellor) (Convenor); Professor P Andras (Dean, School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment); Professor P Barron (Dean, Business School); Dr M Bonnett (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Dr S Campbell Casey (School of Applied Sciences); Professor V Charisis (Associate Dean, Research & Innovation); Professor S Dawkes (Dean, School of Health & Social Care); Dr H Earnshaw (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Professor C Garden (Associate Dean of Learning & Teaching); N Graham (Vice-Principal, International); Professor G Hutchison (Dean, School of Applied Sciences); Professor G Jayalakshmi (School of Arts and Creative Industries); Professor N Karodia (Vice Principal Learning & Teaching and Deputy Vice Chancellor); Dr S Logie (Director, Student Services & Academic Registrar); Dr D Maclean (Dean, Schools of Arts and Creative Industries); Dr F Maclean (School of Health & Social Care); A McGoff (Vice Principal of Business Engagement & Dean of the Business School); Dr R Osowska (Business School); Dr E Urquhart (Business School); B Stillie (Associate Dean of Learning & Teaching); R Wallace (Student Rep); Dr G Wright (Associate Dean, Research & Innovation).

IN ATTENDANCE:

D Cloy (Head of Governance and Risk); C Cunningham (Head of DLTE); S Easter (Director of Student Recruitment and International) (item 9); M Greenhalgh (Director of Strategy & Planning and Secretary to Court) (online); C Taylor (Director of Information Services).

APOLOGIES:

F Accolla (Student Rep); Professor A Al-Dubai; F Ali (Student Rep); S Gerrard (SACI); M Leavitt (School of Health & Social Care); Dr K Leitch (School of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment); C Marvis (ENSA Sabbatical); Dr F McQueen (School of Applied Sciences); Professor P Robertson.

OBSERVING:

R Tomlinson (Chair of Court).

1. WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

1.1 The Convenor welcomed attendees to the meeting.

1.2 The apologies were **noted**.

PART A: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & DECISION

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7 MARCH 2025

AB(24/25)45

2.1 The minutes were **approved**.

3. MATTERS ARISING

i) Research & Innovation Update Summary

- 3.1 It was noted that responsibility for this area had passed to the Deputy Vice Chancellor and Vice Principal Learning & Teaching and that Academic Board would receive further reports in due course.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT*

AB(24/25)47

- 4.1 The Principal introduced her written report and highlighted the severity of the continuing deterioration in the external environment impacting higher education, exemplified by the situation at the University of Dundee, which had led to a focus on the importance of effective leadership and governance in the sector.
- 4.2 The decline in the University's league table positioning was noted and it was agreed that it would be important to understand what had led to that and what would be required to move it.
- 4.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the report.

5. FUTURE ACADEMIC FOCUS

i) Qualitative Review*

AB(24/25)48

- 5.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided an overview of the methodology and findings of the qualitative element of the academic strategic refresh study it had sponsored. The aims of this work included the identification of areas for growth or development, a view on our current academic structures and indications of ways to focus our efforts to deliver our core missions in the future. The paper set out our learning from the qualitative study, with a separate paper covering the findings of the quantitative study. The paper sought further approval from Academic Board to take forward a series of actions or further work to deliver on the outcomes highlighted during this process. The intention was that those actions and future work which are cost-neutral will report back to Academic Board for consideration and approval. However, where costs may either be added or withdrawn, such decisions should move to University Court which holds the responsibility for the financial oversight of the institution.
- 5.2 Discussion followed during which members welcomed the insights provided by the paper and further explanation was provided on the workflows envisaged between ULT/SLT, Academic Board/Academic Board committees and Court as further work and actions progressed.
- 5.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **approved** and **endorsed** the recommendations contained in the paper.

ii) Quantitative Review*

AB(24/25)49

- 5.4 Academic Board received the paper which provided an overview of the methodology and findings of the quantitative element of the academic strategic refresh study it had sponsored. The aims of this work included the identification of areas for growth or development, a view on our current academic structures and indications of ways to focus our efforts to deliver our core missions in the future. The paper outlined the findings of the quantitative review towards generating forward a series of actions or further work to deliver on the outcomes

highlighted during this process. The impetus for this work was to ensure greater financial sustainability, coherence and relevance for longer-term success. The quantitative review considered matters of efficiency alongside the 'health' of programmes from the student experience and outcomes perspective. It was the intention that those actions and future work which are cost-neutral will report back to Academic Board for consideration and approval. However, where costs may either be added or withdrawn, such decisions should move to University Court which holds the responsibility for the financial oversight of the institution. It was noted that no decisions had yet been made but when there was greater clarity after Phase 3, we would engage in consultation discussions with our unions.

5.5 Discussion followed during which members welcomed the exercise and the value provided by pulling this data together which enabled a holistic view of programmes and a foundation from which to move towards our desired future position. Further clarity was provided on how the detailed Phase 3 work at programme level would be progressed over the summer. It was noted that Academic Board would receive a report on progress and outcomes at its October meeting.

5.6 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the findings and recommendations contained in the paper.

6. ANNUAL PLAN PRIORITIES 2025/26*

AB(24/25)50

6.1 Academic Board received the report which provided the proposed Annual Plan priorities for 2025/26. Academic Board was asked to note the proposed plan and priorities which would be reported to University Court alongside the budget for endorsement.

6.2 Academic Board **noted** the report.

7. HOME RECRUITMENT & RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

7.1 Academic Board received a presentation updating on home student recruitment and recruitment strategy.

7.2 Discussion followed during which the importance of continuing to innovate and have a differentiated approach for different academic Schools was noted. It was noted that further work was needed to identify opportunities where we can fill gaps with colleges. Potential approaches to enhance our engagement with secondary Schools were also suggested.

7.3 Academic Board **noted** the update.

8. TERTIARY QUALITY ENHANCEMENT REVIEW UPDATE

AB(24/25)51

8.1 Academic Board received paper which provided an update on preparations in advance of the upcoming Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER).

8.2 Academic Board **noted** the update.

9. QUALITY FRAMEWORK ANNUAL REVIEW

AB(24/25)52

- 9.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided the outcome of the routine monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation of the Quality Framework during 2024/25.
- 9.2 Academic Board **approved** the annual report on the effectiveness of the Quality Framework.

10. ACADEMIC REGULATIONS 2025/26

AB(24/25)53

- 10.1 Academic Board received proposed amendments to the University's Academic regulations for academic session 2025/26, following approval by Quality and Standards Committee.
- 10.2 Academic Board **approved** the amendments to the Academic Regulations as detailed in appendix one and two and granted permission for additional amendments to regulations pertaining the University Assessment Policy, MFA regulations and the potential development of a Masters in Accounting programme to be approved via Convenor's Action.

11. PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC CALENDAR

AB(24/25)54

- 11.1 Academic Board received the paper which presented a proposal to amend the University's Academic Calendar as used for both undergraduate (UG) and taught postgraduate (TPG) provision. The proposal had been previously presented and discussed by Education & Student Experience Committee and the University Leadership Team and was intended to improve the student and staff experience and increase income. The paper also highlighted that a Project Team would be established to oversee the implementation of this work, with a targeted launch in Academic Year 2027/28
- 11.2 Academic Board **approved** the proposal to amend the University's Academic Calendar from 2027/28.

12. ACADEMIC CALENDAR TO 2030/31

AB(24/25)55

- 12.1 In view of Academic Board's approval of the proposal to amend the University's Academic Calendar from 2027/28, it was noted that an amended paper would be brought to Academic Board's October meeting for approval.

13 REF PLANNING UPDATE

AB(24/25)56

- 13.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided an update on preparations for the 2029 Research Excellence Framework.
- 13.2 Academic Board **noted** the update.

14 EDUCATION AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE AB(24/25)57
REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE & PROPOSED NEW
SUB-COMMITTEE

14.1 Academic Board **approved** minor amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Education and Student Experience Committee (ESEC) and **approved** the proposal that the Student Success Group become the Student Success Committee and become a formal Academic Board sub-committee reporting to ESEC alongside Quality & Standards Committee and Collaborative Provision Committee. The Terms of Reference of the Student Success Committee was also **approved**.

15 HONORARY AWARDS* AB(24/25)58

15.1 Academic Board **approved** the Honorary Award nominations recommended by the Honorary Awards and Visiting Titles Committee for onward transmission to Court for approval.

15.2 It was agreed that it would be desirable to adopt a themed approach to nominations in future. Accordingly, Honorary Awards and Visiting Titles Committee was asked to consider and bring a paper to the October meeting of Academic Board recommending themes for the next three years against which nominations would be sought.

15.3 It was also agreed that it would be desirable to secure broader diversity of characteristics through future nominations.

PART B RECEIPT OF MINUTES

Academic Board received the minutes of the following meetings to confirm that its sub-committees were continuing to meet their remits and were undertaking business on its behalf to the standard it expects.

16. Minutes of Education and Student Experience Committee AB(24/25)59
meeting held on 14 May 2025.

The minutes were **noted**.

17. Minutes of Research & Innovation Committee meeting held on AB(24/25)60
26 March 2025.

The minutes were **noted**.

PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

18. COLLABORATIVE PROVISION COMMITTEE: ANNUAL AB(24/25)61
REPORT AND REGISTER OF ACTIVITY

18.1 Academic Board **noted** the annual report on collaborative provision.

19. MILITARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT AB(24/25)62

19.1 Academic Board **noted** the annual report from the Military Education Committee.

20. TOP RISKS MONITORING REPORT (2 of 3)* AB(24/25)63

20.1 Academic Board **noted** the Top Risks monitoring report.

21. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2025/26

Noted as:

October 2025 - TBC; 21 November 2025; 06 March 2026; 05 June 2026.

***denotes a paper to which an exemption under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 applies.**